



**to be here, to be
strong, to be
oddly and
boldly**

alsalty

**to be here, to be strong, to be oddly and boldly
estranged by alsalty**

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Summary:

years afterwards the events of '89 still haunt the losers club but as they become older they realise that there's a lot of /other/ issues

1. i.

Author's Note:

wow i'm bad at summaries but hopefully this is alright?

title from: let me down easy by gang of youths

Stan slept on a mattress on Bill's floor, close to Bill's own bed. It was late and Bill couldn't sleep, he needed to sleep with the light off, but there was no way he was turning it off. In the light he felt a sense of comfort, even though he knew It wouldn't come back for years to come, he still worried, he was still afraid. Stan rustled and turned in his sleep, he grumbled as he moved, even this scared Bill. Normally Stan was a peaceful sleeper but after what had happened at the sewers he hadn't been able to sleep properly. Bill could see him struggling and clearly distressed but thought that waking him would only make it worse.

Suddenly Stan jolted up, looking panicked and breathing heavily.

"Are y-you okay?" Bill peered over the mattress.

"Fine." Stan muttered, there were visible tears in his eyes. "I'm fine."

"D-do you want to come up h-here?" Stan paused for a moment, not meeting Bill's eyes.

"Yeah." Once Stan came closer, Bill could see he was trembling. Stan sat beside Bill, who had also sat up and leaned into his chest, a soft sob coming from the boy. They sat like that for a few minutes, Stan holding onto Bill, both of them breathing heavy.

"I can still feel it." Stan muttered, his voice broken, his grip tightened on Bill's shirt. "I can still feel those...teeth." He shuddered.

"I-I see it too."

"It's different." Stan said into Bill's chest, Bill raised one of his hands and put it on the back of Stan's head, running his fingers through his hair. "I thought you'd all left me, all I could see was It"

"W-we didn't leave you, we w-would n-never leave you."

"But you did." Stan sniffled. "No matter how much you say that, it still happened."

"It w-wasn't real Stuh-Stan." Bill was almost talking to himself here, reinforcing the idea that It wasn't, that it had all been in his head like

Georgie would just be down the hall.

"I like it when you stutter on my name" Stan said quietly, changing the subject so quickly, although both of them sprung a similar fear in him.

"O-Okay." Bill didn't know what to say, he couldn't imagine anyone ever liking his stutter.

"It's cute." Stan's voice softened as he looked up to Bill. He needed a distraction right now, he always did. He didn't want to see the images of that clown, of It, but Bill was nice, Bill was a comfort, Bill was always there.

"T-Thanks?" Bill was confused; yes, of course he was in love with Stan, who wouldn't be with a face like that? However, all those months of repressing and denial had led him to believe that Stan would never feel the same. So this comment felt left of field, strange, something that confused Bill despite being in love with his best friend. Stan was still looking at him as he was deep in thought, a small smile on his face. In all of his fear Bill was always the one to bring him back, to cheer him up.

"And your hair." Stan was rambling now, he seemed tired. "So soft." His voice trailed off as if he meant to say so much more. Stan had calmed down in his rambling but Bill was quite the opposite. Stan's words had stirred his nerves. But before Bill or Stan could say another word, Stan fell asleep.

Stan woke up in Bill's arms, something he wasn't entirely opposed to but yet confused about he had ended up in that situation. Bill was still asleep, his breath was soft, and there was some audible sound from him. Stan didn't know what to do, he wanted to stay but he also didn't want to cause Bill any embarrassment when he woke up. Stan carefully tried to remove himself but Bill started to move.

"Sorry." Stan muttered under his breath, just in case Bill was awake. As he was climbing back into 'his own' bed, Bill began to move at the feeling of Stan's absence. Even asleep, he could tell something was wrong, that just seemed to be the person he was.

"Stan." He mumbled, he didn't stutter, it seemed strange to hear his voice so pure, but his words were still tired and weak.

"Yes?" Stan said after a pause.

"C-Come back." It was simple statement, just two pleading words but the way in which Bill's voice manipulated it, turning it into so much more than just sounds, than just a request, his heart was beared on his words and Stan could see it all. Stan thought it over. He wanted

to, of course, but Bill's parents could be heard in the kitchen. He knew they wouldn't check in the room, they never did, not after Georgie's disappearance, they didn't care about what Bill did at all. Still Stan worried, he tended to do that and as desperate as he was for Bill's touch, his fear overcame that, it always did.

Stan looked at him with that confused look on his face, as if he couldn't understand what Bill was saying.

"C-Come b-b-back up." Bill repeated, fighting to get the words out. Stan held his breath, looking at Bill who was surrounded by the light of his window, as if he was some kind of god. Stan mentally cursed himself before standing up again, his old t-shirt almost falling over his thighs as he stood. Bill smiled softly, in a genuine way, Stan had always liked his smile. Stan had always liked everything about him and going over to relish in his touch was just pushing the boundaries of friendship. He'd be kidding himself if he even began to think that he didn't want it but that wasn't what was on Stan's mind, the thought of if Bill knew what he really was doing, what he was doing to Stan, played on his thoughts.

When Stan sat back on the bed it felt less natural than it had the previous night, probably because he was more worried about Bill's feeling than a demon clown, it was almost nice to have that luxury again. Still, Bill opened his arms and comforted Stan, for no good reason. He wasn't scared anymore, he didn't need this, neither of them did. But it was still happening. Bill ran one hand along the side of Stan's face, feeling the scars; they were deep and still not completely healed. Stan flinched.

"D-Does that h-hurt?" Bill asked, sounding concerned.

"No." Stan replied. He was just afraid of the touch, the reminder that his face even looked like that as well as a reminder of what had happened.

"I'm suh-sorry" Bill pulled his hand away, Stan caught it.

"No, it's fine." He didn't know why he said that or did that. Maybe he just wanted Bill's hands on him.

"Are you su-sure?" Stan nodded in response.

"Just don't peel the skin." Stan added as an afterthought. Bill looked so focused as his fingers moved their way around the wounds, being careful to not hurt Stan but still to get a feel for them. Stan didn't get to see the way Bill moved around them but he could see his eyes and the expression on his face. How concentrated he seemed on such a similar task. He looked so in awe, so adorable. Stan couldn't control

what happened next. Before he knew what he was doing he was kissing Bill, all soft and innocent, just a quick peck on the lips but it was more than he meant to do. Bill just began to ease into it as Stan pulled away.

"I'm sorry!" Stan jolted up, running both his hands through his hair and over his face. "I'm so sorry."

"I-It's not a p-problem." Bill said calmly. It was almost comedic how their roles had been reversed. Bill shifted himself slightly so he could look at Stan head on. Stan's face was red; he had clearly been embarrassed by his actions and did not believe in Bill's compliance. He couldn't meet the other boy's eyes. Bill reached out, placing a gentle hand on the side of Stan's face careful to still abide his rules. At the touch Stan looked up, his eyes full of wonder.

"I-Is this o-okay?" Bill asked.

"Fine." Stan replied, his words almost a whisper. Bill kissed him on cheek, Stan's eyes widened.

"Stuh-Still okay?"

"Yes." This time Bill kissed him on the lips, lingering for longer than Stan had the first.

"That's okay too." Stan said with a small smile, darting his eyes away from Bill.

"Guh-Good" Bill nodded, his gaze strong on Stan. Bill kissed him again, both were more confident this time. It was becoming more familiar, more natural and Stan was beginning to realise he liked it an awful lot, not just the act of kissing but the fact that it was coming from Bill Denbrough onto him. Stan grabbed onto the collar of Bill's navy t-shirt, feeling between kisses the smile that came from Bill, he was just glad to have his enthusiasm matched.

It had seemed that Bill had forgotten that he had invited the rest of the loser's club over that day, once his parent's had headed off to work. His parents left without a goodbye but he could see the car drive away, through his window. They both worked on a Saturday morning, Bill didn't mind. Once they left Stan and Bill both got dressed and returned to kissing on Bill's bed. They didn't go much further than that. They might have liked to but it was a silent agreement that kept them just kissing.

Bill had his hands tangled in Stan's curly hair and Stan's hands were underneath Bill's shirt, holding onto his narrow frame. The sound of knocking, loud talking and even a few rocks at Bill's window interrupted them. Bill got up, leaving Stan to lay on the bed alone,

and checked the window. He was surprised to see his friends, despite being the one who invited them.

"Our f-friends are here" Bill said, turning his back to the window.

"Oh." Was all that Stan replied with.

"W-We buh-best be meeting them." Stan nodded in response as they walked to the door together Stan snuck in one final kiss.

"You look like you've been fucking" Richie said as the door opened, Stan's hair was messy, something that Bill had only just noticed, something that Stan wouldn't have let happen up any other circumstances.

"A simple hello would be fine Richie." Stan crossed his arms.

"C-Come in everyone." Bill opened the door wider, allowing his friends to funnel through into the living room. Bill wasn't entirely sure what they were going to do, it was too windy outside to do anything exciting and Bill hadn't planned anything, all he really wanted to do was kiss Stan.

Bill and Stan sat next to each other on the couch, careful not to be too close in order not to raise suspicion but Richie was going to make fun of them no matter where they sat. Richie and Eddie sat in the arm chair or rather, Eddie sat in it and Richie sat in his lap, which Eddie wasn't too happy about. Bev, Ben and Mike all sat on the floor with some cushions and blanket, they all seemed rather happy.

"We should go to the quarry." Bev suggested, they'd run out of things to do and it was reasonably nice outside.

"Suh-sure I d-don't see why not" Bill replied, looking over to Stan as if he needed an answer from him.

"Yeah we should go." Stan shrugged in response. Everyone else's bike were thrown on Bill's front lawn but Bill and Stan's were in his garage.

"We just need to get our bikes." Stan said standing up and looking at Bill. "We'll meet you outside."

"D-D-Do you think you think they noticed un-anything?" Bill asked, trying to keep to a whisper as they retrieved their bikes.

"No, Richie was only joking. That's what he does. He jokes."

"I k-know." Bill offered a smile.

"It will be fine, Richie's too in love with Eddie to notice anything else"

“Oh.” Bill laughed under his breath. “Are you c-coming to my g-game tomorrow?”

“I always come Bill.”

“I’m g-glad Richie’s not here”

The whole group always attended Bill’s baseball games, they sat in the front row and cheered as loud as possible. The games were sometimes played at night so Stan would drive them home, as he was the only one with both a license and a car. On this particular night, the Derry High School team had won against the Hermon team, which had led Bill to be very excited, they won a lot but the thrill never really faded. All his friends cheered for him, and they didn’t stop cheering until he came up to them in the stands, a broad smile across his face. Richie was clapping him on the back and Bev hugged him. Everyone was just so full of pride for him. Stan was the proudest though, he was wearing Bill’s letterman jacket from the previous year and was grinning almost as much as Bill. They still hadn’t told anyone but from the jacket, the pride on Stan’s face and of course the embrace they shared. Richie whistled and laughed at them, all while throwing an arm around Eddie.

The driving plans had been changed tonight. Stan and Bill were going home together, Ben, Bev and Mike were spending the night at Ben’s house, they were being picked up by Ben’s mom. This left both Richie and Eddie with no plans and no way to get home.

“Eds, let me drive you home.” Richie offered, he genuinely meant it.

“You don’t have a car.” Eddie had his eyes focused on Bill still. He was walking to Stan’s car with him; they were in each other arms, all smiles and laughs. Eddie saw how they looked at each other, saw the silent smiles and the nights they had together. He ached for it; he longed to be in Stan’s shoes.

“How did I get here then?” Richie said in his regular tone, despite Eddie ignoring him. He pushed his thick glasses closer to his eyes; they were falling off his nose. Eddie had mixed feelings, he’d had such strong feelings for Bill for so long, he was filled with adoration for the boy. But in recent times whenever he’d see someone flirting with Richie (and he always flirted back), he would feel a pang of jealousy in his heart.

“Your mom let you borrow her car?” Eddie wasn’t exactly in the mood for a long conversation.

“No.” Richie shook his head; his curly hair fell over his face.

“Oh-”

“Your mom did.” He replied with that classic wide grin.

“You’ve really done better.”

“Just let me drive you home! Please?” He sounded so desperate so Eddie had to say yes.

Bill sat in the passenger seat of Stan’s car, looking out the window and at Stan, completely in awe of how good Stan looked in his jacket.

“W-Where did you find t-that uh-uh-anyway?” Bill asked, trying to be smooth, trying so hard not to stutter.

“This?” Stan pulled on the jacket slightly as he raised his eyebrow. “It was just in your closet.”

“Oh.”

“Do you like it?” Stan smirked.

“I-It looks” Bill took a deep breath, really taking in the sight of Stan.

“Uh-uh-Amazing.” Stan looked back to the road, still smiling. He’d always found Bill’s stutter endearing, so many people hated it but Stan had always loved it. He was so thankful his name started the way it did, hearing Bill hesitate on the ‘Stuh’ was adorable, it was something that Stan had always found attractive about him, or maybe he just liked it when Bill said his name.

“Thanks” Stan winked. For once Bill was the more awkward one. Stan could be so charming sometimes. He seemed stiff but when he loosened up and allowed himself to do so, he was an enigma.

Bill sat in his seat, bouncing his leg, not sure of what to say. He wanted to kiss Stan, touch him, do things to him that he definitely couldn’t do to someone in control of a vehicle. As soon as Stan pulled up outside of Stan’s house Bill kissed him. Stan couldn’t even get a word in. They’d never kissed like this before, fast and desperate, it was exciting for the both of them. Bill gripped onto Stan’s- his jacket, pulling Stan closer, although he was going over the gearbox, which made it somewhat uncomfortable. Stan laughed a little bit, trying to stifle his giggle, as Bill looked oh so serious.

“J-Just get i-into my lap,” Bill said.

“Okay.” Stan climbed over the gearbox, trying not to knock it. He almost fell into Bill’s lap, which was an issue because the car was so small.

“This is better” Stan smiled softly.

“D-Definitely b-b-better” Bill moved a curl off Stan’s face, just thinking for a moment how lucky he was, it seemed sappy but that’s

all that was on Bill's mind. Then they were kissing again, Stan had his arms around Bill neck and Bill was holding onto his hips. Stan grinded down on Bill's hips, eliciting a small sound from the other boy. This excited Stan, he'd never heard anything like this from Bill before and he wanted to go further, just to see what Bill would do.

"I-I n-need to get h-home." Bill pulled away from the kiss, he looked as if he didn't want to do it but he could see the light on in the house. He'd need to come in soon.

"Me too" Stan replied, a hint of sadness in his voice. He pushed their foreheads together before kissing him again. "Get out of my car."

2. ii.

As per usual, Richie, Stan, Eddie and Bill met outside the bike shed, avoiding the Bowers gang. Everyone seemed a little tired, probably because of Bill's late night game. Stan was a different type of tired though, he hadn't be able to sleep after the previous night's events. He laid awake full of a bittersweet excitement and the effects were clear. Stan had bought his thermos full of coffee as a substitute. He often didn't bring it because no matter how tired he was, Richie's unoriginal jokes about the brand name would always make it worse. "I can't believe Stan has his own name on his fucking thermos." Richie said as soon as he pulled it out.

"You've made that joke a million times." Eddie crossed his arms, leaning on the bike rack.

"And I do it all to make you smile."

"It doesn't work." Stan added, taking a sip.

"Oh fuck off Stanley." Richie sighed dramatically. "Where's Bill?"

"I don't know" Stan shrugged, he'd noticed Bill's absence but hadn't thought too much of it.

"Have you checked your bedroom?" Richie raised an eyebrow, Eddie was already fed up.

"He didn't come home with me."

"He's probably just running late, we should get to class." Eddie huffed, picking up his backpack and heading off. He seemed unsettled and almost angry, more so than he usually was.

"What's wrong with Eddie?"

"Nothing's wrong with Eds. Probably just slept rough because I wasn't there last night."

"You're unbelievable."

Turns out Bill was just running late, nothing was wrong, he'd just happened to sleep in. He missed homeroom, which he shared with Bill and Bev so they thought he was absent as well. He got to his first period science class almost out of breath.

"You're here." Stan said nonchalantly as Bill set down his books beside him.

"S-S-Sorry." Bill sat down.

"There's nothing to be sorry about, you're here aren't you?"

"I-I g-guess I am."

“Have you done the worksheet?”

“W-What works-sheet?” Bill looked alarmed.

“Don’t worry.” Stan replied, opening his folder. Everything was very neat and colour coded, red for science, blue for maths and so on.

“You can copy mine.” He pulled out his sheet that was filled with, no doubt, correct answers all written in his perfect handwriting and ink pen. Bill found the sheet at the back of his folder, it was kind of crumbled and creased but still acceptable to hand up.

“Quick, get it all down before he comes in.” Stan looked briefly to the door.

“T-Thanks Stuh-Stan, you’re the b-best.” Bill grinned before coping the answers out. His own writing was messy but understandable, sort of like his voice.

Stan shouldn’t have gotten such a rush from a simple compliment, but he did. Everything about Bill made his heart jump and soften. He couldn’t help that the kid was perfect in every conceivable way. He watched as Bill wrote, he wasn’t going to listen to a teacher ramble on while Bill was sitting right next to him. Bill licked his lips a lot when he wrote; of course Stan noticed that, he had a deep set concentration in his eyes, like the simple biology task sheet meant the world. Stan placed a hand on Bill’s shoulder, giving him a gentle rub. Bill didn’t flinch at it, rather he leaning into in, feeling as if Stan’s touch was commonplace, natural.

Richie had a class with Eddie and Ben but of course he wasn’t in it. Not when Bev had offered a smoke under the bleachers and when Eddie had seemed somewhat angry before school.

“Did Eddie seem off to you?” Richie asked, leaning down on the grass.

“I haven’t spoken to him yet.” Bev replied.

“Yeah but yesterday.” Richie raised his eyebrows. “He was weird.”

“Why would I notice something like that? You’re the one who’s in love with him.”

“Hey get off my dick.”

“Sorry would you like Eddie on it?”

“I really feel like you’re stealing my comedy material and I don’t appreciate it.” Richie’s face screwed up as he took another drag of his cigarette.

“Just talk to him.” Bev shrugged, she did love her friends but sometimes Richie’s rambling was a bit too much.

"Why would I do a thing like that?" Richie said with a tinge of sadness in his voice. Everyone was sick of his pining; it had been going on for far too long. That was the last thing he said for a while, his expression mellowed and he closed his eyes, just letting the warmth of the sun pass over his freckled face.

"C'mon miss let's 'ead back to the classroom." Richie stood up, doing his terrible accent that was probably meant to be English, but just sounded like garbage.

"Shut up Richie."

Richie had a Health class next; he took it for the sole purpose of spending time with Eddie. His teacher didn't even bat an eye at smell of smoke Richie bought inside. He sat down beside Eddie, getting ready to say something funny.

"Beep beep Richie," Eddie said, turning to him with a glare.

"I haven't even opened my mouth!" Richie said defensively.

"I'm just not in the mood." Eddie sighed, fiddling with his pen.

"Oh. What's wrong Eds?" Richie leaned into his own palm. He seemed oddly sympathetic so much so that Eddie was put off telling him anything. Maybe if Richie had been his usual trash mouth self Eddie could've told him what was wrong and had it met with a degrading joke.

"Nothing." Eddie looked down at his empty workbook. "Don't call me Eds."

"Okay." Richie shut up, for the first time in a while.

At lunchtime, they all sat together in the cafeteria, sitting close to the door as always. Bill and Stan sat next to each other with Bev and Richie beside them. On the other side of the table sat Mike, Ben and Eddie. Richie was almost falling off the bench. Everyone talked loudly apart from Eddie, whose silence was not unnoticed.

"Hey," Bill whispered into Stan's ear. "D-Do you w-want to help me get p-photos for the school pup-paper?" He looked down at the camera around his neck.

"Sure." Stan smiled. "After school?"

"Y-Yeah." Stan put his hand on Bill's check briefly before realising exactly what he did.

"What the fuck? Is this allowed?" Richie pointed to them, laughing a little bit.

"I'm going to class." Eddie announced, standing up suddenly.

"That's weird." Mike said, looking to Richie. "What's wrong with him?"

"I am supposed to know?" Richie replied.

"Yes." Everyone nodded in agreement.

"Well I don't."

"You should talk to him." Bev suggested.

"Fine." Richie said, standing up and accepting defeat. He slipped his hands into his pockets and headed off to find Eddie.

He wasn't really sure where Eddie was, he'd said he was going to class but it was certainly possible he was lying. Richie knew that he had English next; he knew Eddie's timetable as well as he knew his own. So, he went to the English room.

He knocked on the door lightly, no one responded or maybe he just wasn't heard. Nonetheless, he went inside.

"Eddie?" Richie asked to the almost empty room.

"Fuck off." Eddie replied, he was reading a book, seemingly uncommitted. Richie ignored his request and sat onto of the desk next to him.

"The others want to know what's wrong with you." Richie ran a hand through his hair. "That was, badly phrased. We just want to know if our Eddie's okay." Eddie fought away a smile at that.

"I'm fine; you've got too big of a mouth to keep a secret anyway." Eddie rolled his eyes.

"I'm hurt."

"It's true!" Eddie raised his hands, leaning back into his chair.

"Whatever, you can tell me anything, we are, best friends after all." Richie pushed his glasses up.

"Are we?"

"Yeah." Richie reached out and lightly punched Eddie's shoulder.

"We are."

"I have crush on Bill." Eddie was understating, what he felt was so much more than a simple crush.

"Oh fuck." Richie cast his thoughts back to how Stan and Bill had been acting the past few days and Eddie's behaviour in return.

"That's certainly a, situation." He wasn't sure how to react.

"Yeah it is!" Eddie said, suddenly full of anger. "You can't tell anyone!"

"Not even Bev?"

“No one. Not a soul.”

“Fine.” Richie replied, drawing it out. “I won’t”

Once the bell went Stan rushed to Bill’s locker, he was excited to get some alone time with him again. They were heading to the woods, via a path down by the quarry that they knew fairly well.

“Are you ready?” Stan asked, his backpack hanging off his shoulders.

“Y-Yep. Just need to get m-my b-b-bike.” Bill smiled, putting his camera around his neck. He still had the same camera from when they were kids, back in ’88, it was getting kind of old now, a bit worn but it was practical for what Bill was doing. It had been a birthday present from his parents, but mainly Georgie, so it made Bill very happy. Stan always joked about Bill getting a nicer looking camera but he knew what it meant to him.

At the bike rack, they saw Richie and Eddie, very briefly, who were on their way to Richie’s house. They didn’t say much, Richie didn’t even make a joke or anything. Stan would’ve been weirded out if he wasn’t looking forward to the afternoon so much.

The woods were nice and quiet, it was warm and there was a little wind, not enough to be unpleasant. They left their bikes at the opening path; it was a much better idea to walk down the track. Bill was taking some pictures of the new path and newly planted trees, he doubted that the teenagers of Derry would care about such a thing but he was happy to do it. Stan was also excited to see the birds of the woods, he hadn’t been down in a while and he needed to add more to his notes. His notebook was in his backpack as it often was.

Bill had plans for the afternoon but a lot of them were ruined by the observation that he needed both his hands to carry his camera and couldn’t hold Stan’s hand. Still it was pleasant walking through the trees and grass, the soft sun falling on their skin. Every so often Bill would stop and take a photo, the shutter being the loudest thing for miles.

“Can we stop here?” Stan asked upon approaching a clearing.

“S-Sure.” Bill replied. Stan opened his backpack and pulled out his notebook, there was a bench nearby and Stan walked over to it. He gestured for Bill to sit beside him.

“C-Can I lay d-down?” Stan nodded in response. Bill carefully put his head in Stan’s lap, making sure it wasn’t difficult for him to write. It was, but Stan didn’t mind. Bill held his camera in his hand, looking

and the light in this area and trying to think of a way to get a photo of Stan. It wasn't the best time to do so, he was hardly at a flattering angle and Stan would probably be annoyed with the interruption. Sometimes Bill wished his camera were just a little bit quieter, he loved the sound of the shutter and the thrill it gave him, but it wasn't the best for taking candid pictures of his boyfriend.

Stan hummed quietly as he filled in his book, making extra notes and adding extra shading to some of his drawings. Bill had moved from looking at his camera to just looking at Stan, every time Stan looked at him instead of his book Bill's face went red, even more so when Stan returned it with a smile.

"I'm done." Stan said, closing his book.

"I-I've finished all my p-photos." Bill sat up. "B-But I don't want to l-leave just y-yet."

"Neither. Let's just walk around?" Stan suggested.

"W-We could stay h-here." Bill replied, lacing a hand into Stan's hair and placing the other on his hip.

"Sounds good to me."

Bill got home late, with Stan by his side, which neither of his parents were particularly happy with. His camera strap hastily covered the marks on his neck but they could very clearly be seen.

"I need to call my mom." Stan awkwardly asked Bill's mother.

"The phone is in the hall. Tell Bill that Richard called." Stan had to hold back a laugh at that sound of Richie's full name.

"Thank you." He nodded and walked into the hall where Bill was leaning against the wall.

"Richie called." Stan told him as he punched in his home number.

"W-What did he w-want?" Bill tapped his foot.

"I don't know. Do you want me to call him back? Hi mom." Bill nodded as Stan started the conversation.

"Yeah, okay, I have my bike." Stan said very quickly in response to the questions. "I'll see you tomorrow, love you, bye." Bill watched on as Stan got confirmation, he liked how he ended the call, he could not remember a time that him, or nearly any of the other losers had said the same.

"I can stay over." Stan twirled the cord between his fingers, slipping his fingers in and out of the coils. "Should I call Richie?"

"G-Go ahead." Stan took a deep breath before calling him, preparing for some kind of joke about Stan using Bill's phone. Richie picked up immediately.

"Bill! You called bac-"

"Hi Richie." Stan quickly intercepted.

"Stan the man! What are you doing with Bill's phone? Am I interrupting something?" He could hear Richie's shit eating grin.

"I called you."

"Oh. Well I was going to ask Bill if he wanted to come to the Aladdin, but you can come too, I guess."

"Thanks. Is Eddie with you?"

"He went home about, half an hour ago? I got bored and everyone else is busy."

"What time does the film start?"

"Seven."

"Okay so it's about six now, do you want to see a movie with Richie?" Stan turned to Bill.

"I can hear you."

"I don't care. Bill, do you want to go?" Stan narrowed his eyes, holding the phone just below his jaw. Bill thought it over for a bit, he wouldn't be able to be as affectionate as Stan and he would lose a few hours of his evening.

"Why is R-Richie asking us to a m-movie on a Monday night?"

"That's a really good question." Stan brought the phone to his mouth again. "It's Monday."

"Is that a yes?"

"No."

"Then what am I going to do?"

"I don't know. Homework?"

"What the fuck Stan?"

"See you tomorrow Richie." Stan placed the phone the hook, turning to Bill. "That was weird."

"I-It was." He agreed. "D-Do you want to go up-upstairs?"

"Of course." Stan replied. He started walking up the stairs with Bill behind, even though it was Bill's house. He knew that shortly they'd be called down for dinner but he wanted to make the most of the time he had.

Notes for the Chapter:

bill has a canon EOS 750 and stan has a aladdin
stanley thermos. i put too much thought into those
things. thank you for reading!!
also yikes @ eddie

3. iii.

Notes for the Chapter:

another chapter! did anyone ask for it? no! did i write it? yes!

(very very short, much like myself)

Richie sat alone in his room; he had some music playing through his Walkman as he laid on top his bed. He missed Eddie, despite only seeing him a little while ago. He often caught himself missing his friends at night but with Eddie, he missed him earlier and more passionately. He thought about what Eddie had said to him in the classroom, his words touched with the same sadness that Richie felt. He turned his music up a little louder, trying to focus on the lyrics, drums, guitar, anything that drew him away. He kept hearing Eddie's words over and over. He'd felt like he'd known for a while, he saw the way Eddie looked at Bill, how he admired his every move, how he worshiped Bill, how he never acted the same towards Richie. He didn't want to dwell on it, but he did, he couldn't help himself. He didn't like to feel like this, he was the comedian! It felt almost out character for him to be this broken up.

On the contrary, Bill Denbrough was positively in love. He arrived late to school with Stan, for reasons, which they decided not to share. He had English first, a class that he ought to enjoy but no one in his class actually took English seriously and he hardly ever got to do any narrative writing. Mike was also in his class which was good, they often worked together and enjoyed bouncing ideas off each other.

"Why are you looking so happy?" Mike teased as Bill sat down.

"N-No reason." Bill looked forward at the board, not making eye contact with Mike.

"Stan?" Mike had a way of knowing almost anything immediately, especially if something was wrong.

"Yeah." Bill nodded, smiling at the mere mention of the boy's name.

"Wow, you really do like him. Thought I was going to have to give you the shovel talk."

Eddie had a plan, it wasn't a very good plan, nor was it a very polite plan, but it made sense to him. It seemed a little selfish, maybe a lot.

He didn't dare share his idea with anyone, knowing that they would advise against it, tell him it was wrong. He knew it was, he knew that he was truly about to do the wrong thing but if he wanted to get anywhere, he'd have to. He could already hear Bev's advice in his ear, telling him to stop but before he knew it he was at school, sitting beside Richie and opening his mouth to say something stupid.

"Do you want to go with me?" Eddie regretted the words almost immediately.

"Go where?" Richie replied, not fully focused on Eddie as he doodled in his worn down notebook.

"Go out with me." Eddie looked over at him.

"Sure." Richie said almost instantly, a small smile on his face. He reached out and put his hand over Eddie's, which was leaning on the desk. He squeezed it slightly and smiled again.

Shit.

"Bev, holy shit." Richie said, almost out of breath beside her locked.

"What?" She sounded bored but with undertones of panic.

"You'll never believe what happened."

"Tell me!"

"I can't right now" He was well aware of the crowding hallways.

"Why not?"

"Because." He couldn't outright say why. "Come on let's just, skip or something." Bev held her books closer.

"I can't. Jesus Rich just tell me."

"Fine!" Richie quickly looked around, people were getting to class, just as they should have. "Eddie asked me out."

"Did you say yes?"

"Who the fuck do you think I am?" Richie pushed his glasses up. "Of course I said yes." Richie stood with a smile on his face, a pure one.

"Oh my god you're whipped, already." Bev rolled her eyes.

Notes for the Chapter:

this shit is messy im so sorry rich

Author's Note:

hope you enjoyed! my tumblr is @kaijugeiszler